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C O N F I D E N T I A L MANILA 002707

SIPDIS

DEPT FOR EAP/MTS AND WHA/CCA (DMCFARLAND)

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TAGS: [ETRD](#) [ETTC](#) [PREL](#) [RP](#) [CU](#)
SUBJECT: PHILIPPINES-CUBA TIES ARE MINIMAL

REF: STATE 126578

Classified By: Economic Counselor Larry Memmott, reasons 1.4(b) and (d)

11. (C) Below are Post's responses to Department's questions about Philippine economic policies and actions with respect to Cuba. The following paragraphs are keyed to the points in paragraph 5 of reftel:

1A. (U) The Philippine government is an active proponent of democracy and human rights, and a valued regional and global partner of the United States in advancing those causes. Post is not aware of any public statements or actions on the part of the Philippine government in connection with Cuba.

1B. (U) The Philippine government has not issued any public statements on human rights issues in Cuba, nor has the Philippine Congress adopted any relevant legislation or resolutions.

1C. (U) The most recent high-level diplomatic visit between the Philippines and Cuba was President Gloria Macapagal Arroyo's attendance at the summit of the Non-Aligned Movement in Havana in September 2006. The previous high-level visit was that of the Cuban Deputy Foreign Minister to Manila in September 2001.

1D. (U) Post is not aware of any investments in Cuba by Philippine businesses, nor of participation by Philippine businesses in the Havana Trade Fair of November 2008.

1E. (U) The Philippines and Cuba do not have any bilateral trade agreements. In September 2001, the Philippine Chamber of Commerce and Industry signed an agreement with its Cuban counterpart, but no activities have been undertaken under this agreement. In June 2007, the Philippines and Cuba signed a two-year agreement to promote cooperation in science, culture and the arts, and sports, but Post is not aware of any specific initiatives arising from this agreement.

1F. (SBU) There are no formal academic exchange programs or scholarships between the Philippines and Cuba. The Ministry of Foreign Affairs reports that four Filipino medical students maintain consular registrations with the Philippine embassy in Havana. There is no Cuban-paid medical travel, nor are there Cuban doctors working here. The Government of Cuba approached the Philippine government in 2007 offering a medical exchange program, but the Philippines did not reply formally.

KENNEY